



*United States Attorney  
Southern District of New York*

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CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
MARVIN SMILON, HERBERT HADAD  
MICHAEL KULSTAD  
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE  
(212) 637-2600

**BROOKLYN MAN CONVICTED ON FEDERAL CHARGES  
OF ENGAGING IN FOREIGN SEX RING INVOLVING CHILDREN**

JAMES B. COMEY, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that STEFAN IRVING was convicted today in Manhattan federal court on charges of traveling to Mexico and Honduras for the purpose of engaging in sexual acts with minors. After a one-week-trial by a jury, IRVING was found guilty of all counts in a five-count superseding Indictment with committing various sex offenses against children.

According to a Complaint and the Indictment, in 1996, federal investigators undertook a nationwide law enforcement initiative focusing on individuals suspected of traveling to Mexico for the purpose of engaging in sexual acts with children. The investigation came to focus on a resort known as Castillo Vista del Mar, located in Acapulco, Mexico.

According to the charges, the investigation demonstrated that Castillo Vista del Mar operated in 1998 and 1999 and existed to cater to adult males who lived in the United

States and desired to have sex with boys in Mexico.

According to the court papers, the boys who stayed at Castillo Vista del Mar often were homeless orphans or for other reasons living on the streets and beaches of Acapulco, Mexico. In exchange for shelter, food, clothing, and gifts, the boys, ranging in age from 6 to 17, would engage in sexual activity with the adults staying at Castillo Vista del Mar.

The trial evidence included photographs of IRVING's May 1998 trip to Acapulco and visit to Castillo Vista del Mar. The Government also played for the jury two examples of the pornographic movie files found on IRVING's home computer. Furthermore, the Government presented numerous letters, journals, and diaries written by IRVING. In those writings, IRVING discussed his sexual interests in young children, boys between the ages of 6 and 12, and his desire to travel to foreign countries to pursue those interests.

Finally, the Government presented testimony from a now 18 year-old Mexican citizen as well as the former manager of Castillo Vista del Mar, who is an American citizen presently incarcerated following a conviction in Texas for possessing child pornography. For his part, the Mexican youth described how he, at the age of 13, was recruited off the streets of Acapulco to live at the resort and how once there he learned that American men visited to engage in sexual relations with children. The resort's manager, who testified as a cooperating witness for the Government, recounted communications he had with IRVING during

the years preceding IRVING'S 1998 visit to Castillo Vista del Mar.

In those communications, which were both written and oral, IRVING described his sexual interests in young boys and sexual activities he had engaged in with children. The manager also provided testimony regarding IRVING's activities with young children at the Acapulco resort. IRVING's activities included fondling a child in the resort's swimming pool and accompanying at least two children into his private bedroom area at the resort.

Mr. COMEY stated: "In a letter he wrote in 1996, Mr. IRVING regretted that he was not able to write more explicitly about his sexual activities with children in Mexico until the Government found 'something more important to pay attention to.' I want to reaffirm the federal Government's commitment to protecting children and stress that the day Mr. IRVING hoped for will never come to be."

Count One charged IRVING with traveling to Acapulco, Mexico, in May 1998 for the purpose of engaging in a sexual act with a minor which carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison. Counts Two and Three charged IRVING with traveling to Honduras in January 1999 for the purpose of engaging in a sexual act with a minor, and in particular with a child under 12 years of age. Count Two carries a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison and Count Three carries a maximum sentence of life

imprisonment. Counts Four and Five charged IRVING with receiving and possessing child pornography. Count Four carries a maximum penalty of 30 years in prison and Count Five carries a maximum penalty of 5 years in prison. In addition, each count carries maximum fine of \$250,000.

United States District Court Judge LEWIS A. KAPLAN scheduled January 8, 2004, for the sentencing of IRVING.

IRVING, 56, lived in Brooklyn, New York, prior to his arrest in May, 2003.

Mr. COMEY praised the investigative efforts of the Bureau of Immigrations and Customs Enforcement in this case.

Assistant United States Attorney MICHAEL SCUDDER, Jr. is in charge of the prosecution of this case.

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